

California Congressional Members Applaud Announcement of \$205 Million in Recovery Act Funding for California Broadband Projects

Today, Congresswomen Doris Matsui (D-Sacramento) and Anna Eshoo (D-Palo Alto), members of the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Communications, Technology and the Internet, commended the National Telecommunications and Information Administration's (NTIA) announcement that California will receive Recovery Act funding totaling \$205,147,578 for seven Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) projects in California. One such project, the Foundation for California Community Colleges, has been awarded \$10,944,843 to provide outreach, training, and learning support to increase digital literacy and broadband usage. As a result, community colleges systems like the Los Rios Community College District, which serves the Sacramento community, will benefit from the fiber optic cables being laid up and down the state as a direct outcome of this grant.

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Decision Comes in Response to Letter Spearheaded by Reps. Matsui, Eshoo

WASHINGTON, DC – Today, Congresswomen Doris Matsui (D-Sacramento) and Anna Eshoo (D-Palo Alto), members of the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Communications, Technology and the Internet, commended the National Telecommunications and Information Administration's (NTIA) announcement that California will receive Recovery Act funding totaling \$205,147,578 for seven Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) projects in California. One such project, the Foundation for California Community Colleges, has been awarded \$10,944,843 to provide outreach, training, and learning support to increase digital literacy and broadband usage. As a result, community colleges systems like the Los Rios Community College District, which serves the Sacramento community, will benefit from the fiber optic cables being laid up and down the state as a direct outcome of this grant.

“In our increasingly connected world, it is important that all Americans have access to, and a comfort with, broadband technology,” said Rep. Matsui. “I am pleased that California has been awarded these funds, and that the Los Rios College District will be among the beneficiaries. These awards will assist both urban and rural communities throughout California in bridging the digital divide and ensuring that our citizens are able to be active participants in all aspects of society.”

On July 30, Congresswomen Matsui and Eshoo sent a letter to NTIA Assistant Secretary and Administrator Lawrence Strickling urging the NTIA to give greater consideration to California BTOP applications in the next round of Recovery Act funding. NTIA announced their decision to award California over \$205 million in BTOP funding early Wednesday.

“Every day the Internet becomes a more influential and critical resource for education, free speech, and commerce around the world,” said Rep. Eshoo. “When a child cannot access the Internet, she suffers a severe disadvantage to her peers. This is one reason we specifically crafted language in the Recovery Act to fund broadband deployment to underserved areas. I’ve worked on this issue for a long time and I’m so pleased today, because these vital grants are a real victory for California’s children, our first responders, and our nation.”

“The California Emerging Technology Fund commends the California Congressional Delegation for aggressively advocating for Federal investment in needed broadband infrastructure,” commented Sunne Wright McPeak, President and CEO of the California Emerging Technology Fund (CETF.) “We are especially appreciative of Congresswomen Matsui and Eshoo in coordinating the submission of a letter from the Delegation to the Administration. And, we are grateful that NTIA has recognized that the needs are great in California with 44,000 square miles of rural and remote communities still un-served and underserved in our state--an area as large as the State of Kentucky and more than 10 million residents still not connected with broadband to the Internet; a population comparable to the State of Illinois. This investment in California is a major step forward in closing the Digital Divide in America.”

The Foundation for California Community Colleges project focuses on sustainable broadband adoption in the state by providing lower-income students with laptops and software training, and developing an open source online digital literacy course available to students and their families at libraries and other public computer centers.

California BTOP Projects Funded By Today’s Awards, Totaling \$205,147,578

Foundation for CA Community Colleges: \$ 10,944,843

California Connects will provide outreach, training, and learning support to increase digital literacy skills and broadband usage. Laptops and software training will be provided to lower-income students. An open source, online, digital literacy course will be developed and provided to students and their families and accessed at libraries and other public computer centers throughout California.

California Broadband Cooperative, Inc., Digital 395 Project: \$81,148,788

Digital 395 is a 583 mile fiber optic network between Carson City NV and Barstow CA providing Mid-Mile broadband & route diversity to 15% of California. Serving 25,949 households, 2571 businesses, 237 anchors, & 68 POIs in the Eastern Sierra, the Cooperative represents a CPUC-funded public-private partnership aimed at long-term economic development. It creates 1107 shovel-ready jobs over 2 years.

CENIC/Cvin: 18 Counties in the Central Valley -- Middle Mile: \$46,619,757

CVIN/CENIC will build a 1371 mile fiber-optics infrastructure through 18 California counties: Amador, Calaveras, Colusa, El Dorado, Fresno, Kings, Kern, Mariposa, Merced, Madera, Nevada, Placer, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Sutter, Tuolumne, Tulare & Yuba providing direct fiber connectivity to 63 anchor institutions & access by another 40 anchor sites & hundreds of thousands of businesses & residences.

Motorola: BayWeb Public Safety Project for Greater Bay Area: \$50,593,551

The project is a public-private partnership between Motorola, public safety agencies, and broadband providers in the San Francisco Bay area. The project will deploy a comprehensive Middle Mile network that will expand broadband service for emergency responders utilizing LTE technology and offer wireless broadband service to community anchor institutions and residential and business end users.

Plumas Sierra Rural Electric: Middle Mile Project: \$ 13,770,240

The Plumas-Sierra Telecommunications (PST) CCI project is a fiber optic Open Access network that traverses through parts of Plumas, Sierra, and Lassen County that are unserved and underserved. The PST Middle Mile project is a collaborative regional effort.

ZeroDivide: Tribal Project in Rural San Diego: \$686,157

ZeroDivide's "Tribal Digital Village Broadband Adoption Program" will increase broadband adoption from the 17% current baseline usage to 70% (4800 new broadband users) among members of 19 Native American tribes in rural So. California. This will be accomplished through outreach & public awareness, digital literacy training, content creation, and establishment of sustainable business models.

ZeroDivide: Shared Project Between CA, HI, NM, OR, UT, and WA: \$1,384,242

ZeroDivide will expand broadband access to low-income youth in communities across these six states. The project plans to provide training and support services to encourage sustainable adoption and technology awareness with a focus on disadvantaged communities.

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